

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SS-15 NSC-05  
OES-06 CU-02 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00  
PRS-01 PA-01 H-01 NEA-10 SAJ-01 DHA-02 /064 W  
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2184  
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 19676

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, CSCE, UR, US  
SUBJECT: MOSCOW JEWISH CULTURAL SYMPOSIUM

REF: (A) MOSCOW 18576, (B) STATE 304863

1. SUMMARY. ORGANIZERS HOPE TO CONVENE CULTURAL SYMPOSIUM  
AS SCHEDULED ON DEC 21. PRESSURE ON THE ORGANIZERS HAS  
INCREASED ALTHOUGH NO ONE HAS YET BEEN ARRESTED. WHILE  
ORGANIZERS TALK HOPEFULLY, THEY ARE IN FACT PESSIMISTIC  
THAT IT WILL COME OFF AS PLANNED. END SUMMARY.

2. WE RECEIVED DEC 16 A RUNDOWN ON PRESENT PLANS OF THE  
ORGANIZERS OF THE JEWISH SYMPOSIUM. THEY STILL HOPE TO  
OPEN THE SYMPOSIUM ON THE 21ST AND PLAN IT TO RUN FOR  
THREE DAYS. THE AGENDA REMAINS AS BEFORE. THE ORGANIZERS  
FEEL THAT THEY MUST NOT BACK DOWN AT THIS STAGE IN  
RESPONSE TO INCREASING PRESSURE TO CANCEL THE SYMPOSIUM.

3. PRESSURE HAS TAKEN A NUMBER OF FORMS. AS REPORTED  
BY WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS, DEPUTY CULTURE MINISTER  
POPOV CALLED IN SEVERAL OF THE ORGANIZERS LAST WEEK AND  
INFORMED THEM THAT IT WOULD BE "DANGEROUS" FOR THE  
SYMPOSIUM TO TAKE PLACE. SINCE THEN, SEARCHES OF THE  
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APARTMENTS OF VARIOUS OF THE ORGANIZERS HAVE OCCURRED  
AND THEY HAVE BEEN RECEIVING MUCH MORE COMPREHENSIVE  
KGB TAILING AND HARRASSMENT. ON THE 14TH, FAYN, THE HEAD  
OF THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE, AND THREE OTHER MEMBERS WERE  
RECEIVED BY VERGELIS, A CHIEF APOLOGIST FOR SOVIET OFFICIAL  
POLICY ON JEWS AND THE EDITOR OF THE YIDDISH-LANGUAGE  
SOVIETISHE HEIMLAND. VERGELIS REPORTEDLY APPEALED TO THE

ORGANIZERS (AS ONE JEW TO ANOTHER) TO CANCEL THE SYMPOSIUM IN THE NAME OF JEWISH SOLIDARITY. OUR SOURCES COMMENT THAT HIS APPEAL WAS MARRED BY THE FACT THAT HE ADDRESSED THE ORGANIZERS IN YIDDISH WHILE THEY INSISTED ON RESPONDING IN HEBREW. EVEN VERGELIS HAD TO ADMIT THE INCONGRUITY OF FINALLY USING RUSSIAN AS A MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

4. THE ORGANIZERS POINT TO SEVERAL FACTORS WHICH, THEY SAY, INCREASE SOMEWHAT THEIR CHANCES OF HOLDING THE SYMPOSIUM. THEY OBSERVE THAT IT WILL TAKE PLACE AFTER BREZHNEV'S BIRTHDAY AND THUS MAY NOT BE SEEN BY THE AUTHORITIES AS INTERFERING WITH THAT EVENT. INCREASED WESTERN INTEREST IN THE SEMINAR, RESULTING FROM THE SOVIET REFUSAL TO PERMIT THE WESTERN INVITEES TO ATTEND, MAY MAKE THE AUTHORITIES DECIDE THAT IT WOULD NOT BE WORTHWHILE TO ARREST THE SYMPOSIUM PARTICIPANTS. THEY ALSO POINT OUT THAT SHOULD THE COLLOQUIUM NOT TAKE PLACE, THE PUBLICITY WHICH IT HAS ALREADY GENERAGED IN THE WEST AND THE HOLDING OF "PARALLEL" SYMPOSIA IN THE U.S., EUROPE AND ISRAEL WILL MEAN THAT MANY OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE SYMPOSIUM WILL HAVE BEEN MET.

5. IN FACT, MOST OF THE ORGANIZERS ARE PESSIMISTIC THAT THE SYMPOSIUM WILL BE ALLOWED TO TAKE PLACE. MOST FEEL THAT THEY WILL EITHER BE ARRESTED AND PUT AWAY FOR 15 DAYS OR SIMPLY LOCKED UP FOR THE THREE DAYS DURING WHICH THE SYMPOSIUM IS SUPPOSED TO TAKE PLACE. ALL OUR SOURCES AGREE THAT IT IS EXCLUDED THAT THE AUTHORITIES WILL SIMPLY ALLOW THE SYMPOSIUM TO TAKE PLACE WITHOUT HARASS-  
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MENT, EVEN THOUGH, IN PUBLIC RELATION TERMS, THAT WOULD BE THE BEST RESULT FOR THEM.

6. WITH RESPECT TO THE SPECIFIC QUESTION IN STATE REFTTEL, AS OF THE VEENING OF DEC 16, NONE OF THE ORGANIZERS HAD BEEN ARRESTED.

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## Message Attributes

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